



## **Testimony in Support of S.B. 4 and H.B. 5381, Acts Concerning the Connecticut Clean Air Act**

Dear Chairs Lemar and Haskell, Vice Chairs Cassano and Simms, Ranking Members Carney and Somers, and Members of the Transportation Committee:

My name is Noah Vinogradov and I am a resident of New Haven. I'm writing to communicate my strong support for **S.B. 4 and H.B. 5381 - Acts Concerning the Connecticut Clean Air Act**. These bills would expand the use of electric vehicles in both the private and public sectors of the Connecticut economy and provide funds to help enforce the federal Clean Air Act. This is particularly important for combating climate change, particularly greenhouse gas emissions, ozone depletion, and smog particulate matter, because the transportation sector has had the highest emissions within the Connecticut economy every year since 1990. The state government has concluded that reducing transportation emissions is critical to meeting our goal of reducing emissions 45% below 2001 levels by 2030.

As of 2018, there were just over 17,000 out of 1.3 million vehicles registered in Connecticut that are electric. Estimates suggest that in order to reach the 2030 goal, that number will have to increase to around 500,000. The current Connecticut Hydrogen and Electric Automobile Purchase Rebate (CHEAPR) program is a good start, but it is underfunded and will not do nearly enough. Both bills include the "federal Clean Air Act fee," a continual payment to register or renew non-electric vehicles to individuals under the age of 65, which incentivizes the purchase of electric vehicles. The money collected from this fee will be used to implement infrastructure that promotes electric vehicle use, as well as contributing to the Clean Air Act account, which also directs money to sustainability initiatives. Thus, the federal Clean Air Act fee incentivizes electric vehicle use in both the consumer and infrastructure spheres.

By expanding the funding available to CHEAPR, S.B. 4 and H.B. 5381 will help us get on pace to meet that goal of 500,000 electric vehicles in Connecticut, and help us solve the problem of persistent emissions in the transportation sector. Currently, 57.5% of the Clean Air Act fee goes to the Special Transportation Fund, which is spent on sustainable initiatives, but 42.5% goes to the General Fund. H.B. 5381 would amend this so that the 42.5% of the funds from the fee will go directly to a federal Clean Air Act account, so that the money will be spent on environmental initiatives with increased transparency.

The future of the transportation industry is in electric vehicles, and the sooner Connecticut creates the infrastructure necessary to transition to electric vehicles, the better we will be down the line. Electric Vehicle incentives like CHEAPR are present in 45 states, but some states are incentivizing electric vehicles faster than others. In order to hit our goal of 500,000 electric vehicles and compete in a green transportation market, we'll need many more charging stations for those vehicles. S.B 4 sets up a grand program to help fund new EV charging stations, and promotes their construction in both residential and non-residential buildings.

In conclusion, I urge you to take these steps to help move Connecticut towards a sustainable economy. The costs of climate change are enormous, from rising sea levels that endanger coastal homes, to loss of natural wonders that future generations will never enjoy, to more frequent freak weather events that can devastate communities. The EPA has reported that temperatures in Connecticut have been rising twice as fast as the rest of the US, which leads to increased flooding due to more intense rainfall. But if we act now, there is still time. I urge you to favorably vote S.B. 4 and H.B. 5381 out of the Transportation Committee to help decarbonize our economy and protect our future. The lives of everyone in my generation and those of future generations depend on it.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Noah Vinogradov  
New Haven, CT